

Remarks

I. 35 USC § 112

A. 35 USC § 112, ¶1

Claims 1, 21 and 28 stand rejected under 35 USC §112, ¶ 1, as allegedly failing to comply with the written description requirement. In this regard, the Final Rejection states:

2. Claims 1, 21, 28 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112(a) or 35 U.S.C. 112 (pre-AIA), first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. The claim(s) contains subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the relevant art that the inventor or a joint inventor, or for pre-AIA the inventor(s), at the time the application was filed, had possession of the claimed invention.

3. It is unclear how Specification, page 11, lines 18-21 discloses "wherein said data corresponds to a layer higher than said transport layer". Please clarify or amend claims accordingly.

4. It is unclear how Specification, page 11, lines 1-5, 18-21 discloses "associating ... said TCP connection with said file cache". Please clarify or amend claims accordingly.

Applicants respectfully submit that the Final Rejection has, by only providing merely conclusory statements, failed to satisfy its burden to articulate a *prima facie* case. Without adequate notice of the basis of this rejection, the burden to rebut this rejection with evidence and/or argument has not yet shifted to applicants.

The MPEP repeatedly warns that the Office bears an initial burden of establishing a *prima facie* case when making a written description rejection. MPEP §§ 706.07, 2163 (III)(A). A *prima facie* case requires a reasonable basis to challenge the adequacy of the written description. MPEP § 2163.04. The MPEP equates this reasonable basis with "a preponderance of evidence why a person skilled in the art would not recognize in an applicant's disclosure a description of the invention defined by the claims." MPEP § 2163(III)(A). Consequently, the Office must provide a reasonable basis to reject a claim for failing to satisfy the written description requirement, and this requires "a full development" of the reasons showing that, by a preponderance of the evidence, a person of ordinary skill in the art would not recognize a description of the claimed invention in the disclosure. In this regard, the MPEP expressly instructs that merely conclusory

statements are insufficient. Rather, every written description rejection “should be stated with a full development of the reasons rather than by a mere conclusion....” MPEP § 706.03. Stated another way, the Office must adequately explain the perceived shortcomings of the application so that an applicant is properly notified and able to respond. Finally, until the Office establishes a *prima facie* case, an applicant is not under an obligation to rebut the rejection. MPEP § 2163.04. Applicants respectfully submit that such is the case here.

The written description rejection is quoted in its entirety above, and merely states it is “unclear” how parts of the specification disclose the claimed recitations. Absent from this rejection, for example, are any “reasoned or supported statements” supporting this rejection, as the MPEP expressly requires. Indeed, the rejection is devoid of “evidence or reasons” as to why the disclosure fails to reasonably convey to one of ordinary skill in the art that applicants possessed the claimed invention. Thus, the Office has failed to set forth express findings of fact that support the lack of written description conclusion as its own procedures require. MPEP §2163.04. Rather, the provided “reason” is a mere conclusion, which the MPEP expressly warns is insufficient to support this rejection. MPEP § 706.03.

The Office’s failure to meet its burden to articulate a “reasonable basis challenging the adequacy of the written description” with “findings of fact” is fatal to this rejection since applicants are under no burden to rebut it. MPEP §§ 706.07, 2163, 2163.04. For this reason, this rejection is traversed.

In the event that the Office maintains this rejection, applicants respectfully request, in accordance with the principles of compact prosecution, that the Office fully develop the reasons for this rejection by articulating, on the record, “properly reasoned and supported statements” that sufficiently explain what, in the Examiner’s view, is missing from the written description.

Notwithstanding the lack of a *prima facie* rejection, in an effort to expedite the lengthy prosecution of this application, applicants respond below to the rejection as best understood.

Regarding the Final Rejection assertion that “It is unclear how Specification, page 11, lines 18-21 discloses ‘wherein said data corresponds to a layer higher than said

transport layer,’’ applicants are surprised that the Examiner does not recognize the abundant support in the specification for this recitation. In addition to applicants’ previous citation, please see page 9, line 28 – page 10, line 11; page 10, line 30 – page 11, line 5; and page 48, line 28 – page 50, line 2, for example.

When a disclosure describes a claimed invention in a manner that permits one skilled in the art to reasonably conclude that the inventor possessed the claimed invention the written description requirement is satisfied. MPEP §2163. This possession may be shown in any number of ways and an applicant need not describe every claim feature exactly because there is no *in haec verba* requirement. MPEP § 2163. Rather, to satisfy the written description requirement, all that is required is “reasonable clarity.” MPEP § 2163.02. Also, an adequate description may be made in any way through express, implicit, or even inherent disclosures in the application, including words, structures, figures, diagrams, and/or formulae. MPEP §§ 2163(I), 2163.02.

Regarding the Final Rejection assertion that “It is unclear how Specification, page 11, lines 1-5, 18-21 discloses ‘associating ... said TCP connection with said file cache,’” applicants are once again surprised that the Examiner does not recognize the support in the specification for this recitation. In addition to applicants’ previous citation, please see page 10, lines 14-23; and page 11, lines 5-18; page 14, lines 4-20, for example.

Moreover, applicants respectfully note that claim 28 does not even contain the recitations for which the Final Rejection alleges support is “unclear.”

Accordingly, applicants respectfully request favorable reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1, 21 and 28 under the first paragraph of 35 USC § 112.

B. 35 USC § 112, ¶2

Claims 1, 21 and 28 stand rejected under 35 USC §112, ¶ 2, as allegedly being indefinite. In this regard, the Final Rejection states:

6. Claims 1, 21, 28 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112(b) or 35 U.S.C. 112 (pre-AIA), second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which the inventor or a joint inventor, or for pre-AIA the applicant regards as the invention.

7. Claims 1, 21, 28 recite the limitation "said memory". There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim. Examiner suggests "said interface memory" as correction.

As with the written description requirement, the MPEP states that the Office bears an initial burden of establishing a *prima facie* case when making an indefiniteness rejection. MPEP §§ 706.07, 2173. "[S]uch rejections must clearly identify the language that causes the claim to be indefinite and thoroughly explain the reasoning for the rejection." MPEP § 2173. "Thus, when a rejection under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, is appropriate based on the examiner's determination that a claim term or phrase is indefinite, the examiner should clearly communicate in an Office action any findings and reasons which support the rejection and avoid a mere conclusion that the claim term or phrase is indefinite. See MPEP § 706.03, 707.07(g)...Only by providing a complete explanation in the Office action as to the basis for determining why a particular term or phrase used in the claim is 'vague and indefinite' will the examiner enhance the clarity of the prosecution history record." MPEP § 2173(III)(A). Thus, an indefiniteness rejection "should be stated with a full development of the reasons rather than by a mere conclusion...." MPEP § 706.03.

The indefiniteness rejection is quoted in its entirety above, and merely states that there is insufficient antecedent basis for the limitation "said memory," and "suggests 'said interface memory' as correction." Any reason for the alleged lack of antecedent basis is lacking, and, as explained below, is not apparent from the claim language.

The term "said memory" closely follows the term "an interface memory" in the claimed recitation, so it is quite clear what "memory" is being recited. Indeed, there is no other "memory" recited in the claims, so there can be no confusion. Moreover, it has long been common practice to refer to a shortened version of a claim term after introducing the term in full. As but one of many examples, claim 1 of *In re Donaldson Co., Inc.*, 16 F.3d 1189 (Fed. Cir. 1984) begins with "An air filter assembly...for filtering air laden with particulate matter, said assembly...comprising:" and also recites "a plurality of spaced-apart filter elements...within said filtering chamber..., with each of said elements ... being in fluid communication with said air outlet." *Id.* at 1191.

Perhaps the Final Rejection has confused the order in which the claim terms are recited. As noted in MPEP 2173.05(e):

A claim which refers to “said aluminum lever,” but recites only “a lever” earlier in the claim, is indefinite because it is uncertain as to the lever to which reference is made. Obviously, however, the failure to provide explicit antecedent basis for terms does not always render a claim indefinite. If the scope of a claim would be reasonably ascertainable by those skilled in the art, then the claim is not indefinite.

Applicants agree that, had the claim recited “a memory” followed by “said interface memory,” the claim might be indefinite. In the present case, however, there is not such uncertainty as to the meaning of the claim terms.

As stated in MPEP § 2173(II):

The examiner’s focus during examination of claims for compliance with the requirement for definiteness of 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, is whether the claim meets the threshold requirements of clarity and precision, not whether more suitable language or modes of expression are available. When the examiner is satisfied that patentable subject matter is disclosed, and it is apparent to the examiner that the claims are directed to such patentable subject matter, he or she should allow claims which define the patentable subject matter with a reasonable degree of particularity and distinctness. Some latitude in the manner of expression and the aptness of terms should be permitted even though the claim language is not as precise as the examiner might desire. Examiners are encouraged to suggest claim language to applicants to improve the clarity or precision of the language used, but should not reject claims or insist on their own preferences if other modes of expression selected by applicants satisfy the statutory requirement.

Moreover, applicants respectfully note that claim 28 does not even contain the recitation which the Final Rejection alleges are indefinite.

For all these reasons, applicants respectfully request favorable reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1, 21 and 28 under the second paragraph of 35 USC § 112.

II. 35 USC § 103

A. Claims 1, 4, 6-7, 21, 23-24 and 26-33

Claims 1, 4, 6-7, 21, 23-24 and 26-33 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being obvious over U.S. Patent No. 6,427,169 to Elzur (“Elzur”) in view of

U.S. Patent No. 4,625,081 to Lotito et al. (“Lotito”), and in further view of U.S. Patent No. 6,453,360 to Muller et al. (“Muller”).

1. Claims 1 and 21

Regarding claims 1 and 21, the Office Action states:

As per claim 1, 21, Elzur discloses an interface device for a computer having a file system that controls a file cache, the interface device comprising:

- interface hardware configured to process a transport layer header of a packet received via a first physical network port, and to separate said transport layer header from data of said packet, wherein said data corresponds to a layer higher than said transport layer (column 1, lines 18-21, column 2, lines 55-67, column 3, lines 1-3, 46-51, 57-67, column 4, lines 1, 6-11, column 5, lines 63-66; A network controller, at the physical layer, establishes physical communication with the network to send and receive packets to and from the network);
- An interface memory storing a TCP connection established by the computer and handled by said device (column 4, lines 14-17, 23-25, 34-36, 61-67, column 5, lines 63-66, column 7, lines 1-5, ; The network controller includes hardware such as a receive path. The receive path includes a memory that stores flow tuples that identify characteristics of a particular flow associated with a TCP connection);
- An interface mechanism for associating said packet with said TCP connection (column 4, lines 14-17, 23-25, 34-36, 61-67, column 5, lines 14-24).

Elzur does not explicitly disclose:

- to send data from said packet via a second physical network port to a storage unit, thereby avoiding the computer.

However in an analogous art, Lot discloses a packet switcher testing a physical address input port for availability to receive a packet of data. If available, the packet is transferred. The header of the packet determines process identification. Some data is transferred between user processes and buffers in the device, controller, or handler. However, a user process can initiate a transfer of data between source and destination without passing the data through the user's process. For example, a transfer can go from a display record on disk to an operator station with no intervention from user and with direct routing of the data through the system. No processing occurs (column 17, lines 24-27, column 45, lines 20-34, column 67, lines 49-55, column 68, lines 5-17, column 114, lines 37-47).

Therefore, one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made would have found it obvious to implement or incorporate Lot's send data via a second physical network port to a storage unit, thereby avoiding the computer in Elzur's device enabling data to be transferred without processing.

Elzur, in view of Lot, does not explicitly disclose:

- said memory adapted to store said data in said file cache;
- said TCP connection with said file cache.

However, the use and advantages for using such a file cache is well-known to one of ordinary skill in the art as evidenced by Muller (column 56, lines 20-30, column 57, lines 55-65, column 58, lines 26-30, column 59, lines 60-65).

Therefore, one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made would have found it obvious to implement or incorporate Muller's file cache in Elzur's device in order to store non-assembled packets.

Applicants respectfully assert that the Final Rejection fails to set forth a *prima facie* case of obviousness for any of the pending claims, as shown below. Applicants note that the Final Rejection groups together the rejections of claims 1 and 21, but only specifically addresses the recitations of claim 1. Because the Final Rejection fails to set forth a *prima facie* case of obviousness for either claim, applicants first rebut the rejection as presented, and then discuss additional deficiencies in the rejection of claim 21.

The MPEP notes that the Office bears an initial burden of establishing a *prima facie* case when making an obviousness rejection. MPEP §§ 2141, 2142. Applicants respectfully submit that the Final Rejection has, by providing at most merely conclusory statements, failed to satisfy its burden to articulate a *prima facie* case. Without adequate notice of the basis of this rejection, the burden to rebut this rejection with evidence and/or argument has not yet shifted to applicants.

In order to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness, the scope and content of the prior art, the level of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention, and the differences between the prior art and the claim must first be ascertained, and then the Examiner must show that the claim would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention. *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 17 (1966). The Final Rejection, in contrast, fails to address the scope and content of the prior art for all of the claimed recitations, fails to set forth the level of ordinary skill in the art, fails to interpret the claims and consequently fails to address the differences between the prior art and the claims, and fails to provide more than merely conclusory statements as to its conclusion of obviousness.

The failure of the Final Rejection to present a *prima facie* case of obviousness begins with its first obviousness allegation, which states: “As per claim 1, 21, Elzur discloses an interface device for a computer having a file system that controls a file cache.” The Final Rejection offers no evidence or explanation as to how “Elzur discloses...a file system that controls a file cache.” A “file system” is not mentioned anywhere in Elzur. A “file cache” is not mentioned anywhere in Elzur. For at least this reason, the Final Rejection has failed to present a *prima facie* case of obviousness.

On pages 12-14, the Final Rejection provides a “Response to Arguments” section which states in part:

The Office notes the following argument(s):

(a) Regarding claims 1, 21, 28, there appears to be no mention of a “file system” or “file cache” in either Elzur or Lotito.

...

In response to:

(a) Applicant's arguments have been considered but are moot because the arguments do not apply to any of the references being used in the current rejection.

As noted above, however, the Final Rejection, like the two prior Office Actions, begins by asserting that “Elzur discloses...a file system that controls a file cache.” As noted in applicants’ prior response, the present application states, beginning at page 8, lines 24-31:

The file system 23 is a high level software entity that contains general knowledge of the organization of information on storage units 66 and 70 and file caches 24 and 80, and provides algorithms that implement the properties and performance of the storage architecture. The file system 23 logically organizes information stored on the storage units 66 and 70, and respective file caches 24 and 80, as a hierarchical structure of files, although such a logical file may be physically located in disparate blocks on different disks of a storage unit 66 or 70. The file system 23 also manages the storage and retrieval of file data on storage units 66 and 70 and file caches 24 and 80.

Similarly, none of the references cited to allege obviousness teaches or suggests “an interface mechanism for associating ... said TCP connection with said file cache...” as recited in claim 1. This point was made in applicants’ prior response, which applicants reiterate.

The “Response to Arguments” section also states:

The Office notes the following argument(s):

...
(b) Muller does not teach or suggest "an interface memory ... adapted to store said data in said file cache" as recited in claim 1.

...
In response to:

...
(b) Applicant's arguments filed have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

Muller teaches a Network File System (NFS) application, data portion may include NFS headers related to individual NFS datagrams. A datagram is defined as a collection of data sent from one entity to another and may comprise data transmitted in multiple packets. The Network Interface Circuit (NIC) uses header information to process the packet as well as NFS file handles. The NIC has a processor and memory to process and store packet information. Buffers the size of a memory page are used to assemble data (column 11, lines 52-59, column 12, lines 15-20, column 15, lines 19-25, column 16, lines 59-61, column 23, lines 18-30, column 26, lines 15-20, column 54, lines 32-43, column 56, lines 20-30, column 57, lines 55-65, column 58, lines 26-30, column 59, lines 60-65).

Therefore, Muller undoubtedly discloses "an interface memory ... adapted to store said data in said file cache" as recited in claim 1.

The "Network File System (NFS) application" taught by Muller is not, however, "a high level software entity that contains general knowledge of the organization of information on storage units 66 and 70 and file caches 24 and 80, and provides algorithms that implement the properties and performance of the storage architecture." Further, unlike the file system of the present invention, NFS does not "logically organize... information stored on the storage units 66 and 70, and respective file caches 24 and 80, as a hierarchical structure of files, although such a logical file may be physically located in disparate blocks on different disks of a storage unit 66 or 70." In addition, unlike the file system of the present invention, NFS does not "manage... the storage and retrieval of file data on storage units 66 and 70 and file caches 24 and 80."

Moreover, the "Buffers the size of a memory page" that "are used to assemble data" are indeed pages of memory on the host computer, not the "interface memory" of the "interface device" recited in claim 1. Instead, the "The Network Interface Receive Circuit" shown in FIG. 1A of Muller includes "packet queue 116" for holding packets received from the network. Thus Muller also does not disclose "an interface memory..."

adapted to store said data in said file cache,” for “a computer having a file system that controls (the) file cache,” as recited in claim 1.

The present application continues the description of the file system and file cache at page 8, line 31– page 9, line 9, which states:

I/O driver 67 software operating on the host 20 under the file system interacts with controllers 64 and 72 for respective storage units 66 and 70 to manipulate blocks of data, i.e., read the blocks from or write the blocks to those storage units. Host file cache 24 and INIC file cache 80 provide storage space for data that is being read from or written to the storage units 66 and 70, with the data mapped by the file system 23 between the physical block format of the storage units 66 and 70 and the logical file format used for applications. Linear streams of bytes associated with a file and stored in host file cache 24 and INIC file cache 80 are termed file streams. Host file cache 24 and INIC file cache 80 each contain an index that lists the file streams held in that respective cache.

In contrast, the paragraph of Muller that includes the Office Action citation of column 56, lines 20-30 states:

With reference back to FIGS. 1A-B, a packet that is to be transferred into host memory by DMA engine 120 is stored in packet queue 116 after being received from network 102. Header parser 106 parses a header portion of the packet and generates a flow key, and flow database manager 108 assigns an operation code to the packet. In addition, the communication flow that includes the packet is registered in flow database 110. The packet's flow may be identified by its flow key or flow number (e.g., the index of the flow in flow database 110). Finally, information concerning the packet (e.g., operation code, a packet size indicator, flow number) is stored in control queue 118 and, possibly, other portions or modules of NIC 100, and the packet is transferred to the host computer by DMA engine 120. During the transfer process, the DMA engine may draw upon information stored in the control queue to copy the packet into an appropriate buffer, as described below. Dynamic packet batching module 122 may also use information stored in the control queue, as discussed in detail in a following section.

This disclosure of “a packet that is to be transferred into host memory by DMA engine 120 is stored in packet queue 116” does not teach or suggest a file cache disposed on an interface device. Similarly, the paragraph of Muller that includes the Office Action citation of column 58, lines 26-30 states:

In the illustrated embodiment of the invention, data portions of related, re-assembleable, packets are placed into a first category of

buffers--which may be termed re-assembly buffers. A second category of buffers, which may be called header buffers, stores the headers of those packets whose data portions are being re-assembled and may also store small packets (e.g., those less than or equal to 256 bytes in size). A third category of buffers, MTU buffers, stores non-re-assembleable packets that are larger than 256 bytes, but no larger than MTU size (e.g., 1522 bytes). Finally, a fourth category of buffers, jumbo buffers, stores jumbo packets (e.g., large packets that are greater than 1522 bytes in size) that are not being re-assembled. Illustratively, a jumbo packet may be stored intact (e.g., its headers and data portions kept together in one buffer) or its headers may be stored in a header buffer while its data portion is stored in an appropriate (e.g., jumbo) non-re-assembly buffer.

This disclosure that “data portions of related, re-assembleable, packets are placed into a first category of buffers--which may be termed re-assembly buffers,” teaches reassembly at the TCP level, not at the level of a file cache under control of a file system. Moreover, Muller teaches that such buffers are located in host computer memory, not in an interface device. See, e.g., column 56, lines 34-38.

In short, Muller does not teach or suggest an “interface device for a computer having a file system that controls a file cache,” does not teach or suggest “an interface memory … adapted to store said data in said file cache,” and does not teach or suggest “an interface mechanism for associating … said TCP connection with said file cache…” as recited in claim 1.

Applicants note that the Final Rejection has added a couple of citations from Muller to those set forth in the prior Office Action as purportedly disclosing the recitation of “an interface memory … adapted to store said data in said file cache,” to wit, “column 57, lines 55-65” and “column 59, lines 60-65.”

Column 57, lines 55-65 of Muller states:

Free ring manager 1012 attempts to ensure that a buffer is always available for a packet. Thus, in one embodiment of the invention free ring manager 1012 includes descriptor cache 1012 a configured to store a number of descriptors (e.g., up to eight) at a time. Whenever there are less than a threshold number of entries in the cache (e.g., five), additional descriptors may be retrieved from the free descriptor ring. Advantageously, the descriptors are of such a size (e.g., sixteen bytes) that some multiple (e.g., four) of them can be efficiently retrieved in a sixty-four byte cache line transfer from the host computer.

Column 59, lines 60-65 of Muller states:

...associated with NIC 100). In one embodiment of the invention, completion ring manager 1014 includes completion descriptor cache 1014a. Completion descriptor cache 1014a may store one or more completion descriptors for collective transfer from DMA engine 120 to the host computer.

It is difficult to understand why the Final Rejection includes these citations as they appear to be unrelated to the claimed recitation, and the Final Rejection offers no explanation as to their relevance. For at least this additional reason, the Final Rejection has failed to present a *prima facie* case of obviousness.

Further, the Final Rejection admits that “Elzur, in view of Lot, does not explicitly disclose: ...said TCP connection with said file cache.” The Final Rejection then alleges that “the use and advantages for using such a file cache is well-known to one of ordinary skill in the art as evidenced by Muller,” citing the portions of Muller quoted above.

Nothing in those portions of Muller, however, disclose “an interface mechanism for associating said packet with said TCP connection and said TCP connection with said file cache.”

In other words, the Final Rejection lumps together the rejection of two separate claim recitations in order to reject those recitations over portions of Muller that disclose neither of the recitations. Moreover, it is not even clear what is meant by the Final Rejection assertion that Muller discloses “said TCP connection with said file cache.” Stated differently, the Final Rejection does not even assert that any of the references discloses the claimed recitation of “an interface mechanism for associating... said TCP connection with said file cache.”

For at least these additional reasons, the Final Rejection has failed to present a *prima facie* case of obviousness.

In addition to the above-discussed failure to show the scope and content of the prior art, the Final Rejection fails to set forth the level of ordinary skill in the art, and for this reason also the Final Rejection fails to present a *prima facie* case of obviousness.

The Final Rejection also fails to provide an interpretation of the claims, and for this reason also the Final Rejection fails to present a *prima facie* case of obviousness. The MPEP repeatedly teaches that, to provide a *prima facie* case of obviousness, the Examiner must interpret the claims. “The scope of the claimed invention must be clearly

determined by giving the claims the ‘broadest reasonable interpretation consistent with the specification.’” MPEP § 2141(II)(A)(citations omitted). “Ascertaining the differences between the claimed invention and the prior art requires interpreting the claim language...” MPEP §§ 2141(II)(B), 2141.02. Thus, the Final Rejection fails to adequately perform yet another of the basic factual inquiries required by *Graham v. John Deere Co.*

Because, as detailed above, the Final Rejection fails to adequately perform every one of the basic factual inquiries required by *Graham*, it follows that any conclusion of obviousness that is based on the Final Rejection’s factual findings is also flawed. However, in addition to failing to adequately perform every one of the factual inquiries by *Graham*, the Final Rejection also offers merely conclusory statements to support its assumption that the claims are obvious.

For example, beginning with the premise, disproved above, that “the use and advantages for using such a file cache is well-known to one of ordinary skill in the art as evidenced by Muller,” the Final Rejection concludes that “one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made would have found it obvious to implement or incorporate Muller’s file cache in Elzur’s device in order to store non-assembled packets.” Even if this were true it does not address the claimed recitations of “An interface device for a computer having a file system that controls a file cache, the interface device comprising: ...an interface memory ... adapted to store said data in said file cache.” There is simply no consideration anywhere in the Final Rejection and no teaching or suggestion in the cited art of the idea of a file cache on an interface device memory in which the file cache is controlled by the file system of the computer.

Moreover, instead of considering the invention as a whole, the Final Rejection cobbles together bits and pieces of various references that inadequately describe portions of the claims, and then jumps to the conclusion that the claims are obvious.

As noted above, the Final Rejection groups together the § 103 rejections of claims 1 and 21, despite differing recitations of the claims. For example, the Final Rejection does not specifically address the following recitations in claim 21: “an interface receive mechanism that processes a Transmission Control Protocol (TCP) header of a network packet,” “an interface memory storing an established TCP connection that can migrate to

and from the computer, said memory storing said data in said file cache,” and “an interface processing mechanism that associates said packet with said TCP connection and said TCP connection with said file cache to send said data from said packet via a physical network port to a storage unit, thereby avoiding the computer.” For at least these additional reasons, the Final Rejection does not state a *prima facie* case of obviousness for claim 21.

For all the above reasons, applicants respectfully assert that the Final Rejection fails to present a *prima facie* case of obviousness for claims 1 and 21 or for any claim that depends from either of those claims.

2. Claim 4

Regarding claim 4, the Final Rejection states:

As per claim 4, Elzur discloses the interface device of claim 1, further comprising a Fibre Channel controller connectable to the storage unit (column 3, lines 46-60).

Applicants respectfully disagree. A “Fibre Channel controller” is not disclosed in column 3, lines 46-60 of Elzur. A “Fibre Channel controller” is also not disclosed elsewhere in that patent, and is not disclosed in Lotito or Muller.

Applicants respectfully note that the Final Rejection of claim 4 simply repeats the prior rejection, even though the rejection was rebutted in applicants’ prior response, and for this additional reason the Final Rejection fails to present a *prima facie* case of obviousness for claim 4.

3. Claims 6 and 26

Regarding claims 6 and 26, the Final Rejection states:

As per claims 6, 26, Elzur, in view of Lot, does not explicitly disclose the network interface device of claim 1, wherein said file cache is adapted to store said data as a file stream, and the interface device is adapted to send said data as file blocks for storage on the storage unit.

However, the use and advantages for using such file cache to store and interface device to send data as blocks is well-known to one of ordinary skill in the art as evidenced by Muller (column 15, lines 19-25, column 16, lines 57-61, column 21, lines 27-34, 40-41, column 24, lines 29-38).

Therefore, one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made would have found it obvious to implement or incorporate Muller's file cache in Elzur's device in order to store non-assembled packets.

Applicants respectfully disagree. For convenience, the portions of Muller cited by the Final Rejection are quoted in order below:

For example, for a Network File System (NFS) application, data portion 202 may include NFS headers related to individual NFS datagrams. A datagram may be defined as a collection of data sent from one entity to another, and may comprise data transmitted in multiple packets. In other words, the amount of data constituting a datagram may be greater than the amount of data that can be included in one packet.

Other indicia of the communicating entities may be used, such as the Ethernet source and destination addresses (drawn from the layer two header), NFS file handles or source and destination identifiers for other application datagrams drawn from the data portion of the packet.

The Total Length field stores the size of the IP segment of this packet, which illustratively comprises the IP header, the TCP header and the packet's data portion. The TCP segment size of the packet (e.g., the size of the TCP header plus the size of the data portion of the packet) may be calculated by subtracting twenty bytes (the size of the IP version four header) from the Total Length value. After state 416, the illustrated procedure advances to state 422.

In state 420, the values of the Payload Length (e.g., the size of the TCP segment) and Next Header field are saved, plus the IP source and destination addresses.

For example, a set of instructions could be generated for parsing NFS (Network File System) packets. Illustratively, these instructions would be configured to parse layer five and six headers to determine if they are Remote Procedure Call (RPC) and External Data Representation (XDR), respectively. Other instructions could be configured to parse a portion of the packet's data (which may be considered layer seven). An NFS header may be considered a part of a packet's layer six protocol header or part of the packet's data.

It is clear that the recitations of claims 6 and 26 are not met by the portions of Muller cited by the Final Rejection. Once again, the Final Rejection has failed at each of the factual inquiries required by *Graham*, as well as merely providing an unsupported and conclusory allegation of obviousness.

4. Claims 7 and 27

Regarding claims 7 and 27, the Final Rejection states:

As per claims 6, 26, Elzur, in view of Lot, does not explicitly discloses wherein said data is mapped form a logical file format of said file cache to a physical block format of the storage unit.

However, the use and advantages for mapping is well-known to one of ordinary skill in the art as evidenced by Muller (column 50, lines 49-52).

Therefore, one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made would have found it obvious to implement or incorporate Muller's mapping in Elzur's device to lessen the flow key into a smaller range of values.

Applicants respectfully disagree. For convenience, column 50, lines 49-52 of Muller is quoted below:

Thus, in this embodiment only a six-bit 50 number is needed to identify the selected processor. The larger flow key-may therefore be mapped or hashed into a smaller range of values.

It is clear that the recitations of claims 6 and 26 are not met by the cited portion of Muller. Once again, the Final Rejection has failed at each of the factual inquiries required by *Graham*, as well as merely providing an unsupported and conclusory allegation of obviousness.

5. Claim 24

Regarding claim 24, the Final Rejection states:

As per claim 24, Elzur, discloses a Fibre Channel controller connectable to the storage unit (column 1, lines 18-20, column 3, lines 46-52).

Applicants respectfully disagree. For convenience, the portions of Elzur cited by the Final Rejection are quoted in order below:

More particularly, the physical layer 16e typically includes hardware (a network controller, for example) that establishes physical communication with the network 18 by 20 generating and receiving signals (on a network wire 9) that indicate the bits that make up the packets 8.

Referring to FIG. 4, an embodiment 50 of a computer system in accordance with the invention includes a network controller 52 (a local area network (LAN) controller, for example) that communicates packets of information with other networked computer systems via at least one network wire 53. Unlike conventional network controllers, the network controller 52 is adapted to perform functions that are typically implemented by a processor 54 (a central processing unit (CPU), for example) that executes one or more software layers (a network layer and a transport layer, as 55 examples) of a network protocol stack (a TCP/IP stack, for example).

It is clear that the recitations of claim 24 are not met by the portions of Elzur cited by the Final Rejection. Once again, the Final Rejection has failed at each of the factual inquiries required by *Graham*, and does not even provide an unsupported and conclusory allegation of obviousness.

6. Claim 28

Regarding claim 28, the Final Rejection states:

As per claim 28, Elzur discloses a method for operating an interface device for a computer having a file system that controls a file cache, the interface device connectable to a network and a storage unit, the method comprising:

- Receiving, by the interface device from the network, a packet containing data and a Transmission Control Protocol (TCP) header (column 1, lines 18-21, column 2, lines 65-67, column 3, lines 1-3, 46-51, 57-67, column 4, lines 1, 6-11 11, column 5, lines 63-66);
 - A memory storing a TCP connection established by the computer and handled by said device (column 4, lines 14-17, 23-25, 34-36, 61-67; column 5, lines 63-66, column 7, lines 1-5);
 - Processing, by the interface device, the TCP header (column 2, lines 64-67, column 4, lines 14-17, 23-25, 34-36, 61-67);
 - Associating, by the interface device, the packet with the TCP connection (column 4, lines 14-17, 23-25, 34-36, 61-67).

Elzur does not explicitly disclose:

- to send data from said packet via a second physical network port to a storage unit, thereby avoiding the computer.

However in an analogous art, Lot discloses a packet switcher testing a physical address input port for availability to receive a packet of data. If available, the packet is transferred. The header of the packet determines process identification. Some data is transferred between user processes and buffers in the device, controller, or handler. However, a user process can initiate a transfer of data between source and destination without passing the data through the user's process. For example, a

transfer can go from a display record on disk to an operator station with no intervention from user and with direct routing of the data through the system. No processing occurs (column 17, lines 24-27, column 45, lines 20-34, column 67, lines 49-55, column 68, lines 5-17, column 114, lines 37-47).

Therefore, one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made would have found it obvious to implement or incorporate Lot's send data via a second physical network port to a storage unit, thereby avoiding the computer in Elzur's device enabling data to be transferred without processing.

Elzur, in view of Lot, does not explicitly disclose:

- storing, on the interface device, the data from the packet in the file cache.

However, the use and advantages for using such a file cache is well-known to one of ordinary skill in the art as evidenced by Muller (column 56, lines 20-30, column 57, lines 55-65, column 58, lines 26-30, column 59, lines 60-65).

Therefore, one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made would have found it obvious to implement or incorporate Muller's file cache in Elzur's device in order to store non-assembled packets.

Applicants respectfully disagree with this rejection for reasons similar to those mentioned above with regard to claim 1.

For example, the Final Rejection offers no evidence or argument for its allegation that "Elzur discloses a method for operating an interface device for a computer having a file system that controls a file cache."

Similarly, the Final Rejection admits that "Elzur, in view of Lot, does not explicitly disclose... storing, on the interface device, the data from the packet in the file cache." The Final Rejection alleges that "such a file cache is well-known," citing Muller, but Muller also does not teach "storing the data from the packet in the file cache, wherein the file cache is disposed on the interface device."

Further, the Final Rejection offers no interpretation of the terms of claim 28, and as such does not adequately compare the prior art with the claims.

Moreover, the Final Rejection offers merely conclusory allegations of obviousness rather than comparing the claim as a whole with the prior art.

For at least these reasons, applicants respectfully assert that the Final Rejection has failed to provide a *prima facie* case of obviousness for claim 28.

7. Claim 29

Regarding claim 29, the Final Rejection states:

As per claim 29, Elzur discloses the method of claim 28, further comprising creating, by the computer, the information regarding the TCP connection (column 4, lines 35-50).

Applicants respectfully assert that column 4, lines 35-50 of Elzur does not disclose creating anything by the computer, but rather discloses items regarding the “network controller 52.”

The above rejection of claim 29 and applicants’ above response are identical to the rejection of the prior Office Action and applicants’ prior response.

In this regard, the “Response to Arguments” section of the Final Rejection states:

The Office notes the following argument(s):

...

(c) Regarding claim 29, Elzur does not disclose creating anything by the computer.

...

In response to:

...

(c) Elzur teaches the receive path parses the header of each packet to extract characteristics of the packet. The packets may be from different flows and is stored in a memory. Each flow tuple uniquely identifies a flow paired by the receive path. At least one of the flow tuples may be associated with a TCP. This information is used to aid in transporting the packet to its proper destination (column 4, lines 31-51).

Therefore, Elzur indeed discloses “creating, by the computer, information regarding the TCP connection”.

In other words, the Final Rejection simply ignores applicants’ argument that the cited portion of Elzur does not disclose creating anything by the computer, but rather discloses items regarding the “network controller 52.” Stated differently, the Final Rejection equates the “network controller 52” with the computer of claim 29, ignoring claim recitations and failing to perform the *Graham* factual inquiry of comparing the prior art with the claim.

8. Claim 30

Regarding claim 30, the Final Rejection states:

As per claim 30, Elzur discloses the method of claim 28, wherein the packet is received via the port and the data is sent to the storage unit via the port (column 4, lines 43-45, column 6, lines 49-50, column 11, lines 28-30).

Applicants respectfully assert that none of these citations of Elzur disclose the recitation of claim 30, wherein the “port” is a “physical network port” as recited in claim 28, from which claim 30 depends.

The above rejection of claim 30 and applicants’ response are identical to that of the prior Office Action and applicants’ prior response.

In this regard, the “Response to Arguments” section of the Final Rejection states:

The Office notes the following argument(s):

...

(d) Regarding claim 30, none of the citation of Elzur discloses the port as a physical port.

(e) Regarding claim 31, None of the citations of Elzur disclose first and second physical network ports.

...

In response to:

...

(d)-(e) Elzur teaches packets containing destination and source port addresses. These port addresses indicates the specific source and destination computer systems that send and receive packets on the network (column 1, lines 51-67, column 2, lines 1-2, column 4, lines 39-44).

Therefore, Elzur absolutely discloses first and second physical network ports.

Applicants respectfully disagree with the Final Rejection assertion that “packets containing destination and source port addresses... indicates the specific source and destination computer systems.” Instead, packet port numbers can indicate applications within a computer system, and well known port numbers are the same for different computer systems. Moreover, the Final Rejection does not provide an interpretation of the claim term “physical network port,” failing at the *Graham* factual inquiry of comparing the prior art with the claim.

9. Claim 31

Regarding claim 31, the Final Rejection states:

As per claim 31, Elzur discloses the method of claim 28, wherein the interface device includes first and second network ports, and the packet is received via the first port and the data is sent to the storage unit via the second port (column 4, lines 43-45, column 6, lines 49-50, column 11, lines 28-30).

Applicants respectfully assert that none of these citations of Elzur disclose the recitation of claim 31, wherein “the interface device includes first and second physical network ports.”

The above rejection of claim 31 and applicants’ response are identical to that of the prior Office Action and applicants’ prior response, and the relevant “Response to Arguments” section of the Final Rejection is quoted above regarding claim 30.

Applicants respectfully disagree with the Final Rejection assertion that “packets containing destination and source port addresses... indicates the specific source and destination computer systems.” Instead, packet port numbers can indicate applications within a computer system, and well known port numbers are the same for different computer systems. Because “destination and source port addresses” are often the same for different computer systems, those port numbers do not indicate specific source and destination computer systems. Moreover, the Final Rejection does not provide an interpretation of the claim term “physical network port,” failing at the *Graham* factual inquiry of comparing the prior art with the claim.

10. Claim 32

Regarding claim 32, the Final Rejection states:

As per claim 32, Elzur, in view of Lot, does not explicitly discloses the method of claim 28, wherein said file cache is adapted to store said data as a file stream, and the interface device is adapted to send said data as file blocks for storage on the storage unit.

However, the use and advantages for using such file cache to store and interface device to send data as blocks is well-known to one of ordinary skill in the art as evidenced by Muller (column 15, lines 19-25, column 16, lines 57-61, column 21, lines 27-34, 40-41, column 24, lines 29-38).

Therefore, one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made would have found it obvious to implement or incorporate Muller’s file cache in Elzur’s device in order to store non-assembled packets.

Applicants respectfully disagree. The portions of Muller cited by the Final Rejection are quoted in order below:

For example, for a Network File System (NFS) application, data portion 202 may include NFS headers related to individual NFS datagrams. A datagram may be defined as a collection of data sent from one entity to another, and may comprise data transmitted in multiple packets. In other words, the amount of data constituting a datagram may be greater than the amount of data that can be included in one packet.

Other indicia of the communicating entities may be used, such as the Ethernet source and destination addresses (drawn from the layer two header), NFS file handles or source and destination identifiers for other application datagrams drawn from the data portion of the packet.

The Total Length field stores the size of the IP segment of this packet, which illustratively comprises the IP header, the TCP header and the packet's data portion. The TCP segment size of the packet (e.g., the size of the TCP header plus the size of the data portion of the packet) may be calculated by subtracting twenty bytes (the size of the IP version four header) from the Total Length value. After state 416, the illustrated procedure advances to state 422.

In state 420, the values of the Payload Length (e.g., the size of the TCP segment) and Next Header field are saved, plus the IP source and destination addresses.

For example, a set of instructions could be generated for parsing NFS (Network File System) packets. Illustratively, these instructions would be configured to parse layer five and six headers to determine if they are Remote Procedure Call (RPC) and External Data Representation (XDR), respectively. Other instructions could be configured to parse a portion of the packet's data (which may be considered layer seven). An NFS header may be considered a part of a packet's layer six protocol header or part of the packet's data.

It is clear that the recitations of claim 24 are not met by the portions of Elzur cited by the Final Rejection. The present application, at page 8, line 31– page 9, line 9, describes sending the data from the file cache as file blocks for storage on the storage unit, stating:

I/O driver 67 software operating on the host 20 under the file system interacts with controllers 64 and 72 for respective storage units 66 and 70 to manipulate blocks of data, i.e., read the blocks from or write the

blocks to those storage units. Host file cache 24 and INIC file cache 80 provide storage space for data that is being read from or written to the storage units 66 and 70, with the data mapped by the file system 23 between the physical block format of the storage units 66 and 70 and the logical file format used for applications. Linear streams of bytes associated with a file and stored in host file cache 24 and INIC file cache 80 are termed file streams. Host file cache 24 and INIC file cache 80 each contain an index that lists the file streams held in that respective cache.

Moreover, the Final Rejection fails to provide an interpretation of the claim that might allow someone to understand how the cited portions relate to the claim. Once again, the Final Rejection has failed at each of the factual inquiries required by *Graham*, as well as providing an unsupported and conclusory allegation of obviousness, so that a *prima facie* case of obviousness is lacking.

B. Claims 2, 5, 22 and 25

Claims 2, 5, 22 and 25 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being obvious over Elzur in view of Lotito in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,065,096 to Day et al. (“Day”).

1. Claims 2 and 22

Regarding claims 2 and 22, the Final Rejection states:

As per claims 2 and 22, Elzur, in view of Lot, discloses the interface device of claims 1 and 21.

Elzur, in view of Lot, does not explicitly disclose the interface further comprising a SCSI controller connectable to the storage unit.

However, Day discloses SCSI interface channels attached to disk drives (column 2, lines 40-54, column 5, lines 1-25).

Therefore, one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made would have found it obvious to implement or incorporate in Day's interface comprising a SCSI controller in Elzur's device in order to provide for a simple, lower cost RAID controller architecture to enable lower cost and complexity associated with high performance and high reliability storage subsystems.

Initially, applicants respectfully assert that, as discussed above, Elzur in view of Lotito does not disclose the interface device of claims 1 and 21. Day does not mitigate the differences between Elzur in view of Lotito and those claims. For at least these

reasons, applicants respectfully assert that claims 2 and 22 are nonobvious over the cited references.

2. Claims 5 and 25

Regarding claims 5 and 25, the Final Rejection states:

As per claims 5 and 25, Elzur, in view of Lot, discloses the interface device of claims 1 and 21.

Elzur, in view of Lot, does not explicitly disclose the interface further comprising a RAID controller connectable to the storage unit.

However, Day discloses a RAID controller that integrates onto a single integrated circuit of a general-purpose processor (column 2, lines 11-25, 55-67).

Therefore, one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made would have found it obvious to implement or incorporate Day's interface comprising a RAID controller in Elzur's device allowing the disk interface connections and protocols to be more flexibly selected but at the cost of less integration within the circuit.

Initially, applicants respectfully assert that, as discussed above, Elzur in view of Lotito does not disclose the interface device of claims 1 and 21. Day does not mitigate the differences between Elzur in view of Lotito and those claims. For at least these reasons, applicants respectfully assert that claims 5 and 25 are nonobvious over the cited references, and respectfully request favorable reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 5 and 25 under 35 USC § 103.

C. Claim 3

Claim 3 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being obvious over Elzur in view of Lotito in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,172,981 to Cox et al. ("Cox").

Regarding claim 3, the Final Rejection states:

As per claim 3, Elzur, in view of Lot, does not explicitly discloses the interface device of claim 1, wherein said first network port is connected to a first network and said second network port is connected to a second network.

However, in an analogous art, Cox teaches a switch that provides connection between different networks. The switch transmits data bits received from the source port directly to the destination port. It reads the network layer protocol header in a data frame, and if destined for a station on a different LAN segment, it transmits to the destination end station

(Abstract, column 1, lines 63-67, column 2, lines 1-5, 15-20, column 4, lines 3-8, column 5, lines 3-12).

Therefore, one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made would have found it obvious to implement or incorporate Cox's ports on first and second networks in Elzur's device avoiding and eliminating delays by forwarding of data without storing the entire frame.

Applicants respectfully assert that, as discussed above, Elzur in view of Lotito does not disclose the interface device of claim 1. Cox does not mitigate the differences between Elzur in view of Lotito and that claim. For at least this reason, applicants respectfully assert that claim 3 is nonobvious over the cited references.

III. Conclusion

Applicants respectfully request favorable reconsideration and withdrawal of all of the rejections under §§ 103 and 112. For the reasons discussed above, applicants respectfully submit that all the claims are allowable, and a notice of allowance is solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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